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Zero Zero!



INSIDE!

THE MAN WHO WOULD BE WALDO! AND MORE!

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The Search FOR Smilin EDU



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WAS SITTING IN THE SAN FRANCISCO BUS DEPOT, WAITING TO PUT MY JUNKIE BROTHER ON A NEW YORK BOUND BUS.

ED BURNED ALL HIS BRIDGES IN THE BAY AREA, AND A LOT OF PEOPLE TOO.

I GUESS THE
INSPIRATION FOR
ALL THIS BEGAN
ONE DAY LATE
IN 1973.



NYWAY SUDDENLY, A PROPOS OF NOTHING, HE TURNED AND SAID,

HEY! REMEMBER THAT OLD T.V. SHOW WE USED TO WATCH, SMILIN' ED'S GANG?

DID I REMEMBER? YOU BET I DID! SMILIN' ED WAS A FAT OLD GUY WHO LOOKED LIKE THE ORIGINAL DIRTY OLD MAN.



EVEN THEN WE KIDS COULD TELL, THAT ON ED'S SHOW, BUSTER BROWN WAS REALLY PLAYED BY THIS WEIRD-LOOKING MIDGET.

I'M BUSTER BROWN,
I LIVE IN A SHOE.
HERE'S MY DOG TIGE,
HE LIVES THERE TOO.

ED WOULD TELL STORIES OUT OF A BIG BOOK THAT SEGUED INTO CHEESY FILMED ADVENTURES.

ARF ARF!

1 THEN ED WOULD BRING ON HIS ANIMAL SIDE-KICKS. THERE WAS SQUEAKY THE MOUSE, PLAYED BY A HAMSTER, AND MIDNIGHT THE CAT, WHO MAY HAVE BEEN STUFFED, AND WHO SAID ONLY ONE WORD, NICE.

I'VE GOT TO ADMIT, THEY WERE A BIG SNORE; USUALLY ABOUT SOME KID IN INDIA.

THE MOST MEMORABLE PART OF THE SHOW CAME WHEN FROGGY THE GREMLIN SHOWED UP. HE'D MATERIALIZE ON TOP OF AN OLD GRANDFATHER CLOCK.

AND PROCEED TO DISRUPT A COMEDY LECTURE OF ONE KIND OR ANOTHER.

AND NEXT WE ADD...

TWO POUNDS OF CEMENT.

ZAT IS RIGHT, TWO POUNDS OF CEMENT.

ZEE CEMENT

MUST BE...

HAW, HAW, HAW!

NO! NO! NO!
FROGGY! I MEAN

TO SAY, TWO POUNDS OF

GLUE!

OKAY, IT WAS PRETTY STALE STUFF.

HAW, HAW, HAW,
HAW, HAW, HAW,
HAW!

BUT THE ACTION WAS HOT AND HEAVY, AND THE KIDS IN THE AUDIENCE WOULD SCREAM WITH DELIGHT.

BUT THAT WAS A REALLY WEIRD THING: WHENEVER THEY SHOWED THE KIDS, IT WAS ALWAYS THE SAME FILMED SHOT OF THE SAME KIDS!

ANYWAY, AFTER I ACKNOWLEDGED REMEMBERING THE SHOW, MY BROTHER SAID,...

Y'KNOW, I HEARD THAT WHEN SMILIN' ED DIED...

... HIS BODY WAS NEVER FOUND!

HE WENT ON TO SAY THAT HE'D HEARD SMILIN' ED APPARENTLY DIED ON THE WATER IN SOME KIND OF BOATING ACCIDENT.

I THINK I MIGHT HAVE MADE SOME LAME CRACK AT THAT POINT
ABOUT FROGGY PULLING ED UNDER THE SEA, BUT I'M NOT SURE;

...BECAUSE
SUDDENLY IT
WAS TIME FOR
THE BUS TO GO, AND
I NEVER DID HEAR
THE END OF THAT
STORY.

THE NEXT TIME I SAW MY BROTHER, HE'D
KICKED THE HABIT, GOT MARRIED, AND OWNED
HIS OWN HOUSE IN WESTCHESTER COUNTY.

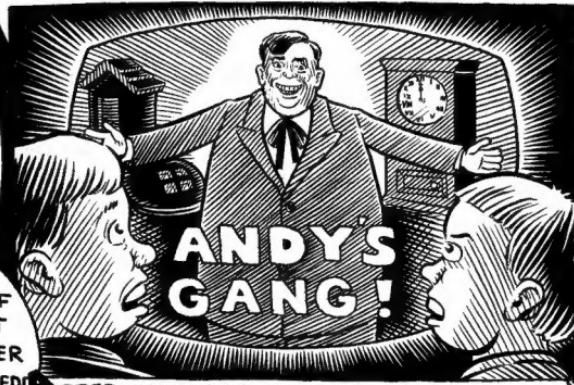
HIS ODD REMARK ABOUT SMILIN'
ED HAD STAYED WITH ME, BUT
WHEN I BROUGHT IT UP, HE HAD
NO MEMORY OF EVER SAYING IT,

...OR EVEN EVER HEARING OF SUCH A THING.

IT SURE GOT ME THINKING MORE ABOUT SMILIN' ED.



THE THING IS,
REGARDLESS OF
WHETHER OR NOT
HIS BODY WAS EVER
FOUND, HERE INDEED
WAS A TRULY
DISAPPEARED
PERSONALITY.



ANDY'S GANG!

AFTER SMILIN' ED DIED IN 1954, THE SHOW LEFT
THE AIR ONLY TO REAPPEAR A YEAR LATER AS
ANDY'S GANG, HOSTED BY HOLLYWOOD FAT MAN, ANDY DEVINE.

BUT OUTSIDE OF SOME NEW FOOTAGE OF DEVINE, IT WAS THE SAME OLD SHOW, RECYCLED.



SAME TIRED OLD
ADVENTURES,



SAME MIDGET
BUSTER BROWN,



SAME MIDNIGHT, SQUEAKY,
AND FROGGY THE GREMLIN,



EVEN THE SAME SHOT OF
THOSE SAME DAMN KIDS.

SAME DAMN EVERYTHING,

EXCEPT FOR SMILIN' ED HIMSELF!



TODAY,
IF THE SHOW
IS REMEMBERED
AT ALL,....

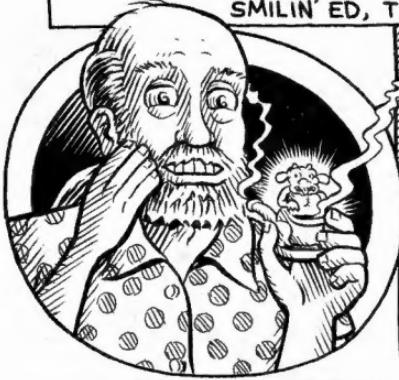
YOU MEAN
THAT WEIRD
SHOW WITH
FROGGY THE
GREMLIN?

YEAH, THAT
WAS FAR
FUCKIN'
OUT!

YEAH, WITH
THAT FAT
GUY! YEAH,
ANDY'S
GANG!
...IT'S
USUALLY IN
ITS REINCARNATED
FORMAT AS
ANDY'S GANG.

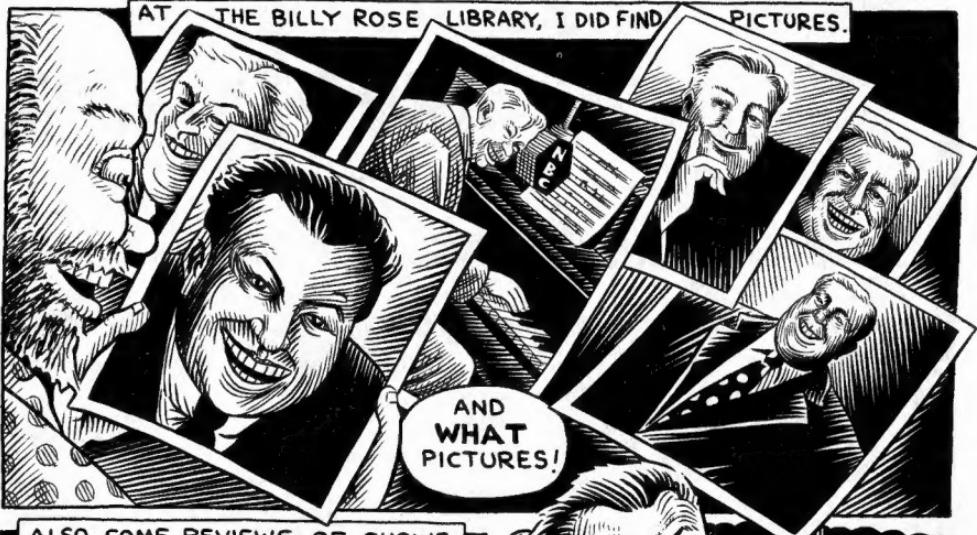
Devine Ale

IT OCCURRED TO ME THAT IF I COULD FIND OUT A LITTLE MORE ABOUT SMILIN' ED, THERE MIGHT BE A GOOD STORY IN IT.

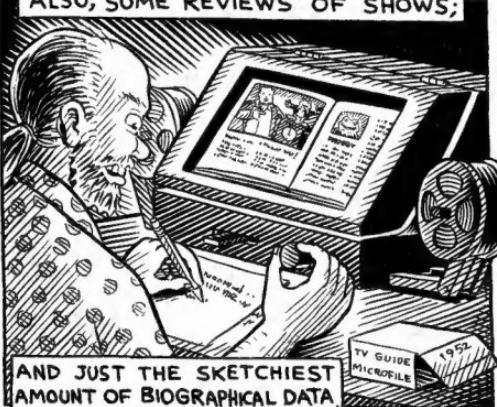


BUT POKING AROUND, I DISCOVERED THAT ABSOLUTELY NO SMILIN' ED SHOWS WERE AVAILABLE ON THE VIDEO TAPE MARKET. ANDY'S GANG? YES. SMILIN' ED? FORGET IT!

AT THE BILLY ROSE LIBRARY, I DID FIND PICTURES.



ALSO, SOME REVIEWS OF SHOWS;



AND JUST THE SKETCHIEST AMOUNT OF BIOGRAPHICAL DATA.



ED WAS BORN IN GEORGIA, AND GOT INTO THE NEW MEDIUM OF RADIO IN 1922.

SO HE WAS ALREADY A LONG-TIME VETERAN KIDDIE HOST IN 1950, WHEN HE TOOK A FLYER IN THE EVEN NEWER MEDIUM OF TELEVISION.

AND FINALLY, TANTALIZINGLY, HE DIED IN 1954 OF AN APPARENT HEART ATTACK ON A CABIN CRUISER HE OWNED.



BUT THAT WAS IT, OR ALMOST IT. THERE WAS ONE OTHER LITTLE PEARL OF INFORMATION ONE OF HIS OBITS DID MENTION THAT A MEMORIAL WAS HELD AT SOMETHING CALLED THE BUSTER BROWN MUSEUM AT 119 EAST 36TH STREET, IN NEW YORK CITY. I DECIDED TO CHECK IT OUT.



WHAT I FOUND WAS A BEAUTIFUL TURN OF THE CENTURY BROWNSTONE, JUST OFF PARK AVENUE.

BUT THE WEIRD GEEK WHO WAS GUARDING THE PLACE WAS NEITHER HELPFUL OR FRIENDLY.

JUST ON A HUNCH, I ASKED AT A NEARBY COMIC BOOK STORE IF THEY KNEW OF ANY SORT OF BUSTER BROWN MUSEUM HAVING BEEN IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD. THE KID BEHIND THE COUNTER KNEW NOTHING AND CARED LESS.

BUSTER WHO?

BUT THE OWNER WAS FRIENDLIER AND WAS ACTUALLY FAIRLY HELPFUL.

IT TURNED OUT THAT SMILIN' ED COMICS, PRODUCED AS A PROMOTIONAL GIVEAWAY BY BUSTER BROWN SHOES IN THE 1950'S ARE FAIRLY COLLECTABLE.

THE TV SHOW'S DULL ADVENTURE SEGMENTS WERE DRAWN IN THE COMICS BY REED CRANDALL, ONE OF THE ALL-TIME GREAT COMIC BOOK ARTISTS.

WHAT'S MORE, THIS GUY HAD HEARD STORY'S OF A BUSTER BROWN MUSEUM AT 116 EAST 36TH STREET TOO, AND HAD EVEN LOOKED INTO THE POSSIBILITY OF OPENING HIS STORE THERE.

BUT THE BUILDING TURNED OUT TO BE NOT FOR RENT AT ANY PRICE.

AND AS I WAS LEAVING, HE LET FLY WITH A PARTING SHOT. APPARENTLY THE BUILDING HAD THE REPUTATION, IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD, OF BEING HAUNTED!



LATER, I HEARD THAT THE ARMENIAN EMBASSY MOVED IN THERE. AND RECENTLY I ACTUALLY FINALLY MANAGED TO GET INSIDE THE PLACE.

WE HAD



BUT THEY NEVER HEARD OF BUSTER BROWN, KEENLY RESENTED MY SUGGESTION THAT THE PLACE MIGHT BE HAUNTED, AND WERE QUITE FIRM IN REQUESTING THAT I LEAVE AT ONCE!

AND SO, ONCE AGAIN THE SEARCH FOR SMILIN' ED SEEMED AS DEAD AS ED HIMSELF. ... OR WAS IT?



SO THEN I GAVE HIM RAPPIN' RASTIS! TOTALLY UP TO DATE!
IN THIS ONE I WOULD HAVE PLAYED AN AFRICAN AMERICAN
HOMELESS GUY WITH TWO FISTS OF IRON AND
THE MYSTIC SOUL OF A POET!

YO' SLAVIN' WAYS IS AT HALF MAST!

MILLION

YO' ASS
IS GRASS!

WE
MOVIN'
FAST!

I
IN IT, ME AND A MILLION BLACK
MEN, OVERTHROW AMERIKA'S ENSLAVING
POWER STRUCTURE!

FO' BETTAH DAYS,
A NEWER PHASE!
THAT'S GONNA LEAVE YOU
INNA DAZE!

AFTER OFFING A
FEW RING LEADERS,
WE MAKE THEM
INTO SLAVES
AND ABOLISH
THE INCOME
TAX!

TOTALLY VISIONARY!

BUT DID HE GIVE IT A CHANCE?

HELL NO!

HE'D JUST

SIT MOPING

LIKE I WASN'T EVEN

THERE!

TRYING TO

WORK UP

SOME

FUCKED-UP

NOSTALGIA

STORY

ABOUT A

FAT OLD

TV STAR

FROM THE

YEAR ONE!

AT A CERTAIN POINT, I LAST I HEARD, HE WAS DOIN' SOMETHING CALLED DECIDED IT WAS TIME FINGER LICKIN' RUNAWAYS FOR SOME KIDS MAGAZINE. FOR ME TO MOVE ON.

WOO WOO!

IT'S ABOUT ALL THESE LIVING CHICKEN PARTS RUNNING AMOK!

SOUNDS PRETTY WEIRD, IF YOU ASK ME!

EEK!

COWABUNGA!

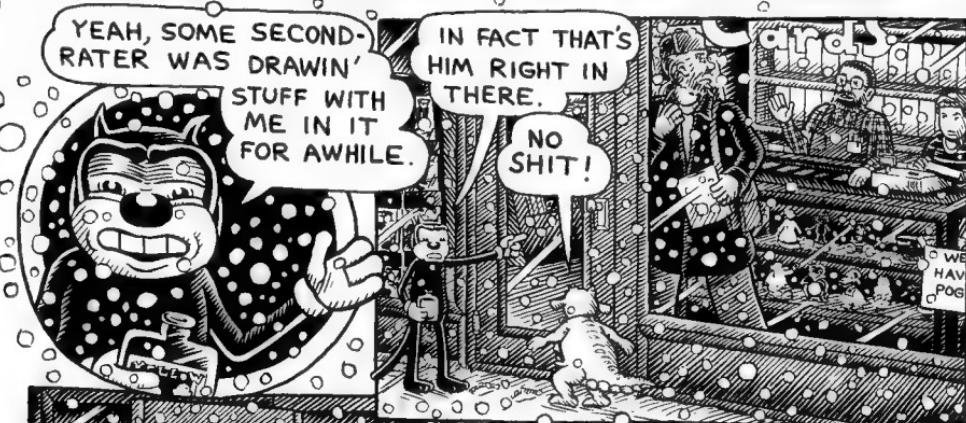
THEN ONE DAY, ABOUT A YEAR AGO, I SAW HIM IN AN UPSCALE COMIC BOOK STORE, OVER ON PARK AVENUE.

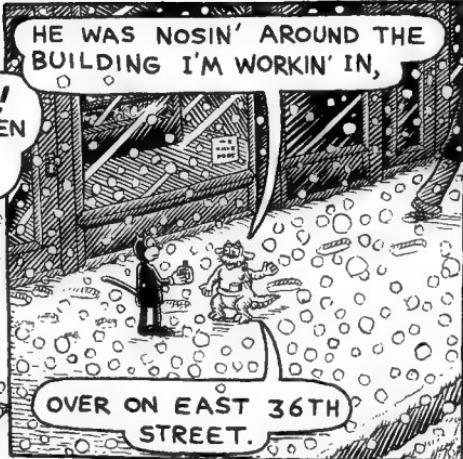
PREDICTABLY ENOUGH, HE HAD HIS NOSE DEEP IN SOME MOLDY OLD COMIC BOOK.

Smilin' Ed's Gang!
WITH FROGGY!

POOR OLD DEITCH, THE OLD DOBBIN OF COMICS!







SO! SHOTSY. YOU STILL RUNNIN'
ERRANDS FOR THAT OLD SHIT BAG
ABRAXAS?

YEAH
SURE!

THAT'S-A
HIM RIGHT
OVER THERE!

WELL,
WHAT DO Y'KNOW!
SO HOW'S IT HANGIN' BRAXY?

FUCK YOU!

AH,
SAME OLD
CHARM BOY
I SEE.

AH NEVER MIND - A
HIM! COME ON!
YEAH!

HEY! HEY!

LOOKA WHO'S HERE!

OOOOOH WA-A-LDO!



BOY OH BOY, THEY'RE
STILL THE SWEETEST
BUNCH OF CUTIES
THIS SIDE OF HELL.

SPEAKING OF
WHICH, WHAT'RE
ALL YOU GUYS
DOIN' OUT OF
HELL?

WELL, UH, Y'SEE, THIS PLACE WAS SOME KIND OF A MUSEUM.
YEAH, TH' BUSTER BROWN MUSEUM; AND WE'RE GUARDIN' IT
'TILL THE GUYS THAT HIRED US CAN GET THIS
BUSTER BROWN STUFF
OUTTA HERE!

OH MAN!

WHAT DEITCH WOULDN'T
GIVE TO SEE THAT!

OH YEAH, THAT'S
SMILIN' ED! WE WATCH HIS SHOW EVERY DAY.

WHAT'RE YOU TALKIN' ABOUT! THAT SHOW
AIN'T BEEN ON IN YEARS!

SMILIN' ED AND BUSTER

WELL I DUNNO,...UH,....

WE GET IT
IN ON THAT
SET EVERY DAY.

HEY WALDO!
YOU'RE
ON T.V.!

HUH?

HEY!
HEY!
IT'S-A
WALDO!

HEY
KIDSH!

WAIT A MINUTE!

WITH MOUNTING RAGE I WATCHED, AS
A SORRY PAGEANT, ALMOST FORGOTTEN,

HEY
KIDS!

YOW!

WHAT
TH' FUCK!

UNFOLDED UPON THE LITTLE SCREEN,

...UNTIL FINALLY
I COULDN'T STAND
IT ANOTHER SECOND!

LISSEN! GO AHEAD AND
LAUGH IF YOU WANT,
BUT THAT
AIN'T ME!

UH
HUH!

YEAH,
SURE!
SURE!

THAT'S RIGHT!

AND IF YOU'LL
ALL JUST
SHUT YER
YAPS A
MINUTE,
I'LL
TELL YA
ABOUT,

HEY! IT WAS
WEIRD!

AND THE WHOLE THING PROBABLY
NEVER WOULD HAVE HAPPENED
BUT FOR A TWIST OF FATE THAT
FOUND ME OUT IN FRONT OF THE
BLARNEY ROSE BAR IN 1954.

THE MAN WHO WOULD BE WALDO!

VARIETY

Fontaine Flix
MAKE TV DEBUT
1930's CARTOONS

WALDO

FEATURING
WALDO THE
CAT MADE IT

I'D JUST BEEN READING THAT THE
OLD FONTAINE FABLES CARTOONS WERE
ABOUT TO BE RELEASED TO T.V.

YOU KNOW
THE ONES.

YEAH, SURE.

LIFE IS JUSTA
BOWLA CHERRIES...

WELL NATURALLY THIS
INTERESTED ME, SINCE MOST
OF THOSE CARTOONS STARRED
YOURS TRULY.

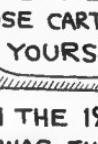
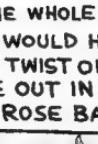
AND IN THE 1930S,
WHEN HE WAS JUST A
KID, LITTLE WALLY FELDER

WAS MY
BIGGEST FAN.

BAR

BLARNEY
ROSE
BAR

Fringo!



SHORT IN STATURE AND LARGE IN NOSE, WALLY ACTUALLY LOOKED SOMETHING LIKE ME.

LIFE IS JUSTA BOWLA CHERRIES!

AND HE'D OFTEN AMUSE THE OTHER KIDS BY IMPERSONATING ME.

OF COURSE I DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT ANY OF THIS WHEN HE CAME FLYING OUT OF THE BLARNEY ROSE BAR THAT DAY.

FUCK YOU WALDO!

WELL NATURALLY WHEN I HEARD ALL THESE CRACKS COMING FROM THE BAR ABOUT "WALDO", I WAS SURE THEY WERE FOR ME!

DIG YOU LATER, WALDO OLD BOY!

YEAH, FUCK OFF WALDO!

BUT WHEN I DARED 'EM TO SAY THAT STUFF TO MY FACE, THEY MARCHED RIGHT BACK INTO THAT BAR LIKE I WASN'T THERE!

WHICH REALLY SHOULDN'T HAVE SURPRISED ME.

IT WAS THEIR CALLING MY NAME THAT THREW ME!

THEN WALLY PIPED UP AND SAID...

...KEEP YOUR SHIRT ON, MISTER, THOSE INSULTS WERE MEANT FOR ME.

...YA SEE, THEY THINK I'M Y,...
THEN HE LOOKED AND SAW ME!

YOW!

WELL YOU KNOW,
SINCE HE THOUGHT
I WAS JUST SOME
IMAGINARY CARTOON
CHARACTER, SEEIN'
ME KIND OF
THREW HIM.

SO I CUT HIM IN ON
THE WINE I WAS DRINKIN'
AND CLUED HIM IN ON
A FEW THINGS...

I EXPLAINED THAT I WAS
AS REAL AS HE WAS,

BUT
BEING A
LOW GRADE
DEMON AND
ALL,

HEY!
TELL ME
ABOUT
IT!

ONLY A FEW FLAKEY LOSERS
LIKE HIMSELF COULD ACTUALLY SEE ME.

LIKE THAT PITIFUL BUM, NATHAN
MISHKIN, THAT I TRAINED UP
TO DO ALL THOSE WALDO
ANIMATED CARTOONS.

AND YOU
BETTER BELIEVE
I STRAIGHTENED
HIM OUT ON WHO
THE **REAL** BRAINS
ON THAT DEAL
WAS!

AND WALLY FILLED
ME IN ON HIS OWN
PITIFUL BACKGROUND.

LIFE IS JUSTA
BOWLA CHERRIES.

HE WAS **STILL** DOIN' THAT TIRED OUT
IMPERSONATION OF ME IN BARS,
CADGIN' DRINKS WITH IT WHEN HE COULD.

BUT AS HE BABBLED ON,
I TOOK ANOTHER LOOK AT
MY PAPER, AND AN IDEA
TOOK HOLD.



I GUESS I JUST HAD TO PROVE I COULD DO IT AGAIN;
AND WITH THE COMMONEST CONCEIVABLE CLAY.

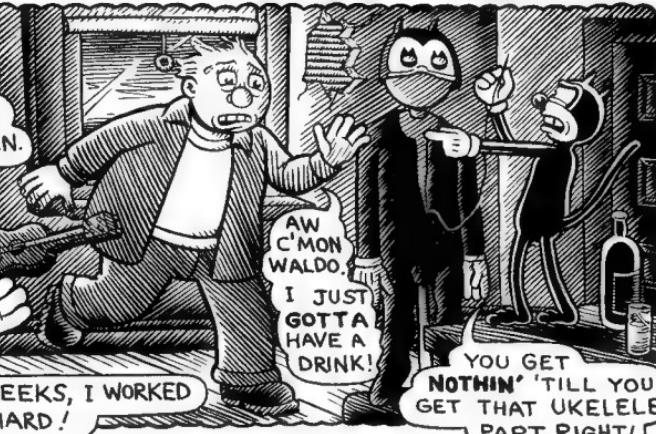


MY IDEA
WAS TO DRESS
HIM UP LIKE ME,
TEACH HIM SOME
OF MY OLD
ROUTINES,
AND TO TRY TO ENSCONCE HIM
AS HOST OF THE FONTAINE
FABLES CARTOON
SHOW ON T.V.

HELL, ALL HE'D
REALLY HAVE TO DO
WAS INTRODUCE MY
OLD CARTOONS AND
SELL STUFF INBETWEEN.



JUST THE SAME,
FOR THE NEXT SIX WEEKS, I WORKED
THAT SAP LONG AND HARD!



LIFE IS
JUSTA
BOWLA
CHE-RRIES,
SO LIVE
N' LAUGH
AT IT
A-ALL!

YES!

AND AT
THE AUDITION,
WALLY
FLOORED
'EM!

AND WHEN FONTAINE
FUNTIME PREMIERED, BY
GOD, WALLY FELDER
WAS ME!

HI GANG!

WALLY WAS ACTUALLY MORE POPULAR
THAN THE CARTOONS! AND HE WAS
GREAT AT COMMERCIALS. SO KIDS,
GET MOM TO PUT BOVRIL BEEF EXTRACT
IN SOME HOT MILK.

OKAY
WALDO!

IT'LL PUT SOME
HEY! HEY! IN
YOUR DAY!
THE
WALDO
WAY!

PREDICTABLY, IT ALL WENT TO HIS
HEAD. HE BEGAN TO WEAR THAT
DAMN WALDO SUIT EVERYWHERE!

IT SEEMED LIKE HE COULD
SELL JUST ABOUT ANYTHING.

C'MON WALLY,
WE'VE GOT TEN
PAGES TO LEARN!
REALLY!

CAN'T YOU
SEE I'M BUSY!

KEEP THOSE
DRINKS COMING
MY MAN.

I COULDN'T GET HIM TO REHEARSE, AND WORSE YET, HE WAS STARTING
TO TREAT ME LIKE A LACKEY. SOMETHING DEFINITELY HAD TO GIVE!

THE WAY I SAW IT,
WALLY NEEDED A
LESSON.

AND AWAY WE GO!

SO ON APRIL FIRST, 1954, INSTEAD OF
DOING THE SHOW WITH WALLY . . .

... I DECIDED TO SIT
ONE OUT AND WATCH
THE SHOW FROM A
LOCAL BAR.

WELL! YOU
CAN SEE WHAT
A DISASTER
THAT WAS!

I NEVER DREAMED THINGS WOULD
BACKFIRE THAT BAD!

BUT WALLY WAS
IN NO FORGIVING
MOOD. HE WAS
THROUGH ON T.V.
AND THROUGH
WITH ME TOO.

HE DID MANAGE
TO BUM DRINKS
ON THE STRENGTH
OF HIS NOTORIETY
FOR AWHILE.

BUT THEN WINTER CAME...

I KINDA LOST TOUCH WITH WALLY AFTER THAT, ALTHOUGH I DID HEAR HE WAS WORKIN' IN THE HUBERT'S MUSEUM FREAK SHOW OVER ON 42ND STREET.

IT WALDO
AND WIN!

HIT WALDO
AND WIN!

G'WAN HOME!
YER MOTHER'S CALLIN'!

BUT
IT WAS A
ROUGH
SHOW!

YAY!

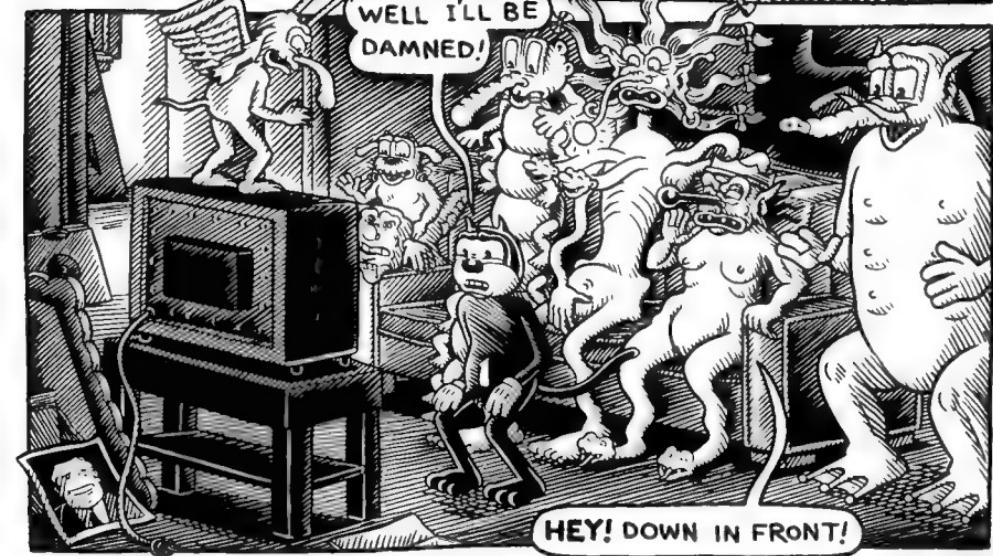
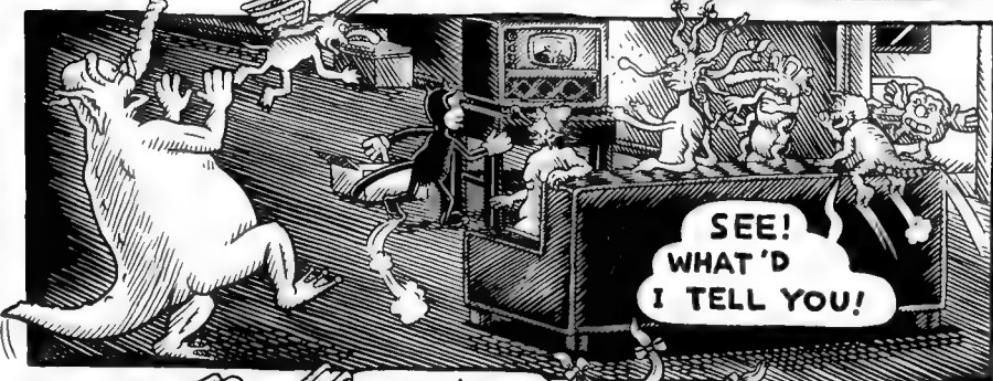
AND IT PROBABLY HASTENED
WALLY'S INEVITABLE FINISH.

THEY FOUND
HIM FROZEN
DEAD ON
NEW YEAR'S EVE,
IN AN OLD PIANO
CRATE.

HIS FINAL HOME, NOW A COFFIN.

HEY
KIDS!

AND SO, AS THE CURTAIN
RANG DOWN ON 1954, WALLY FELDER,
THE MAN WHO WOULD BE WALDO, WAS NO MORE.



SO I
FINALLY GOT AN
EYEFUL OF THE
NEW
SMILIN' ED
SHOW.

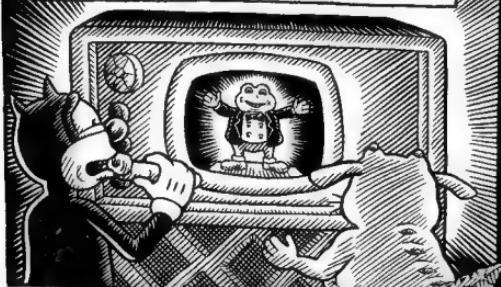
AND BRU-THER! IT WAS WEIRDER AND WACKIER THAN EVER!

The Search For Smilin' Ed

PART 3



THEN FROGGY DID HIS TURN,
WHICH AT FIRST, WASN'T SO
DIFFERENT FROM THE OLD SHOW.



THIS OLD WESTERN GUY WAS
SHOWING HOW TO MAKE SOUR
DOUGH BISCUITS IN THE
BARREL OF A GIANT GUN.



AFTER POURING IN THE INGREDIENTS, HE
PROPOSED TO FIRE THE GUN AND
SHOOT OUT THE FINISHED BISCUITS.



NEXT
WE POUR IN THE...

RUSTY NAILS! HAW! HAW!



THAT'S RIGHT. WE
POUR THE RUSTY
NAILS RIGHT
DOWN INTO...

HAW! HAW!
HAW! HAW!
HAW!

HO HUM...

NO! NO! NO!
FROGGY!

I MEANT MILK!
NOT RUSTY NAILS!

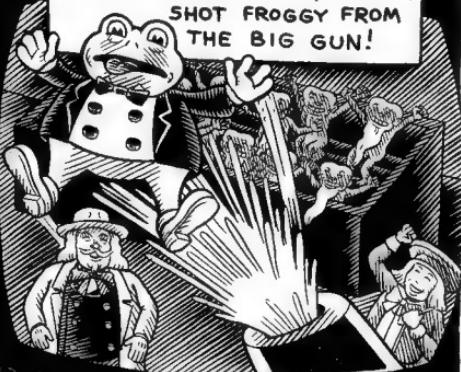
THINGS PICKED UP
A LITTLE WHEN THE
GUY COULDN'T FIND ANY
FLOUR, AND FROGGY WAS
ABOUT TO PUSH A SACK
RIGHT ON HIS HEAD!



EXCEPT BUSTER BROWN'S DOG,
TIGE, PUSHED FROGGY INSTEAD.



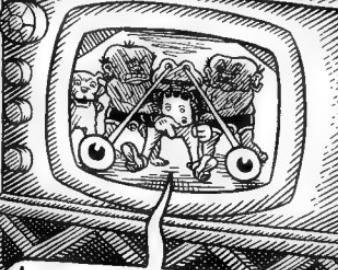
AND A MOMENT LATER, BUSTER
SHOT FROGGY FROM
THE BIG GUN!



AND FROGGY JUST TOTALLY
YOU FUCKING
LOST IT!
BASTARDS!



IT WAS WEIRD!



I'LL KILL YOU ALL!
IF IT'S THE LAST
FUCKING THING
I EVER DO!

Y'KNOW, THERE'S
SOMETHING KINDA
FAMILIAR ABOUT
THAT GUY!



BUT THE BIG SURPRISE CAME DURING THE SHOW'S STORY TIME SEGMENT.

HEH
HEH.



GANG, TODAY'S STORY
IS ABOUT HOW FROGGY
AND I GOT OUR START.

BAH!

OUR STORY
BEGINS IN 1905,
SOMEWHERE IN
THE GEORGIA
PINES!

SMILIN' ED'S STORIES

NOW PICTURE ME, A LAD
OF TEN, CHAINED NAKED BEHIND A
CABIN, BEING FATTENED LIKE
A SLAUGHTER BOUND FARM
ANIMAL!

I COULDN'T REMEMBER HOW
I'D GOTTEN THERE OR WHO I
WAS! BUT LITTLE BY LITTLE,
AS I PUT ON WEIGHT,



... SMALL FRAGMENTS OF MEMORY BEGAN TO RETURN.

ME,
IN A
STRANGE
ROOM!

... LOUD
POUNDING ON
A DOOR,

... A BODY WITH NO
EYES IN ITS SKULL!

AND
THOSE PUPPETS!
AS STILL AND LIFELESS
AS HE WAS!

The Sorry Road To... **RETRIBUTION!**



THEN THE POLICE!

The Sorry Road To... **RETRIBUTION!**

AND MY
PARENTS, SO
OVERJOYED TO
SEE ME!

AND ME,
LASHING OUT AT THEM
LIKE A WILD BEAST!



?

AND ALL THE WHILE, THE OLD
BLACK MAN THAT LIVED THERE, JUST
KEPT FEEDING ME AND FATTENING ME UP!

SO THERE I
WAS, CHAINED
UP LIKE A DOG!

WHEN I BEGAN TO CALM DOWN,
THE MAN LET ME COME INSIDE FOR
MORE FOOD; ALWAYS MORE FOOD!

AND THE MORE I ATE,
THE MORE I REMEMBERED.

IT CAME BACK TO ME, HOW I WAS
FIRST BROUGHT THERE,
TOTALLY OUT OF MY HEAD!

...THE
IMPROPTU
MIDNIGHT
EXAMINATION
I WAS
GIVEN,

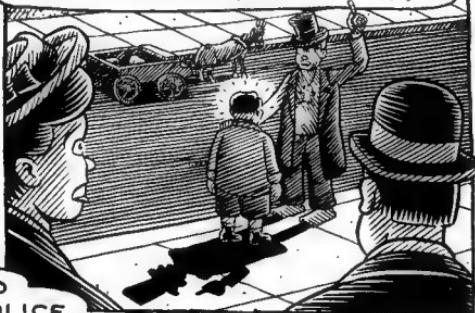
...AND
THE BLACK
MAN'S STRANGE
DIAGNOSIS,...

DEY'S A DEMON
INSIDE O' HIM. WE GOTTS
TO FATTEN HIM UP TO
KEEP IT DOWN!

WELL, THE FATTENING DID BRING ME AROUND. AND ONE DAY I WAS RETURNED HOME; BUT NOT WITHOUT A WARNING!



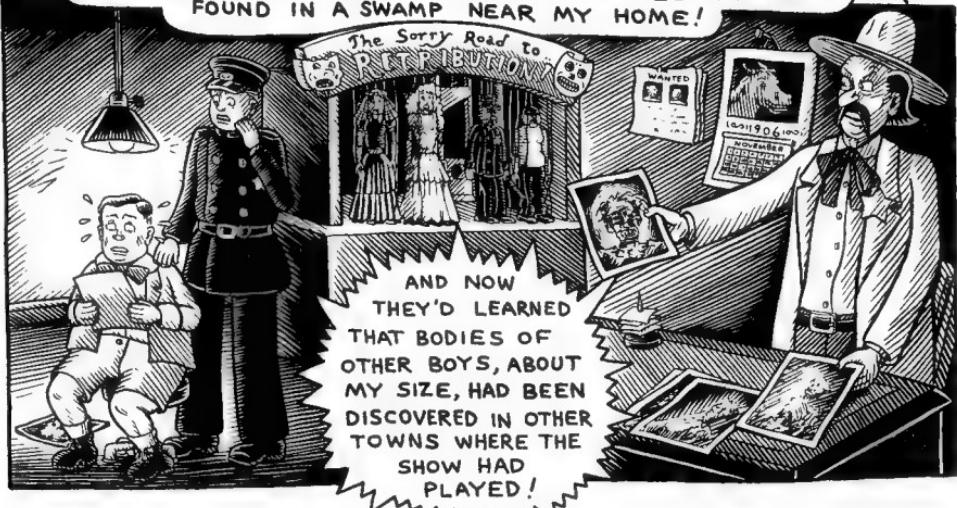
WE WERE WARNED THAT THE DEMON WAS ONLY SLEEPING. LOTS OF FOOD WOULD PROBABLY KEEP IT THAT WAY, BUT THERE WAS A POSSIBILITY THAT IT MIGHT SOME DAY, WAKE UP!



AND THE POLICE WERE EAGER TO QUESTION ME ABOUT THAT STRANGE PUPPET SHOW I'D APPARENTLY BEEN TRAVELING WITH.



IT TURNED OUT THAT NOT LONG AFTER I'D RUN AWAY, THE DECOMPOSED BODY OF A BOY MY SIZE HAD BEEN FOUND IN A SWAMP NEAR MY HOME!



AND NOW THEY'D LEARNED THAT BODIES OF OTHER BOYS, ABOUT MY SIZE, HAD BEEN DISCOVERED IN OTHER TOWNS WHERE THE SHOW HAD PLAYED!

I WANTED TO HELP AND DID MY BEST TO EXPLAIN THE STRANGELY HYPNOTIC FASCINATION OF THE SHOW!

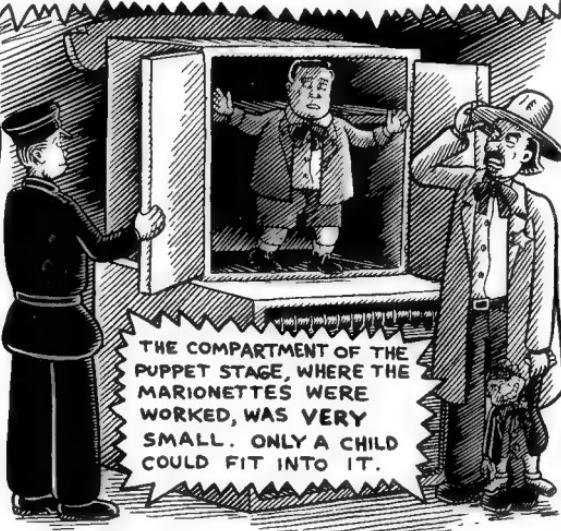
IT DEPICTED THE RISE AND FALL OF A NOTORIOUS FRENCH CRIMINAL!

MOST OF THE PUPPETS WERE ORDINARY MARIONETTES; BUT THE PUPPET PORTRAYING THE MURDERER WAS MOST EXTRAORDINARY!



IT SEEMED TO MOVE WITHOUT STRINGS, AS THOUGH HE WAS ACTUALLY ALIVE!

WHEN I SHOWED THEM THE REASON I'D BEEN LURED AWAY TO WORK IN THE SHOW...



THE COMPARTMENT OF THE PUPPET STAGE, WHERE THE MARIONETTES WERE WORKED, WAS VERY SMALL. ONLY A CHILD COULD FIT INTO IT.

BUT HOW DID THE OTHER PUPPET WORK? AH, THAT WAS THE QUESTION! AND AS I GAZED AT IT IN THE POLICE STATION, MY OWN CURIOSITY ABOUT IT, CAME FLOODING BACK TO ME.



BUT AS MUCH AS I WANTED TO HELP, I SIMPLY COULDNT REMEMBER WHAT ID SEEN THAT DAY!



IT SEEMED THERE WAS NOTHING MORE TO DO BUT SEND ME BACK HOME AND LET MY FOLKS KEEP ME FAT; AND HOPEFULLY, SANE!

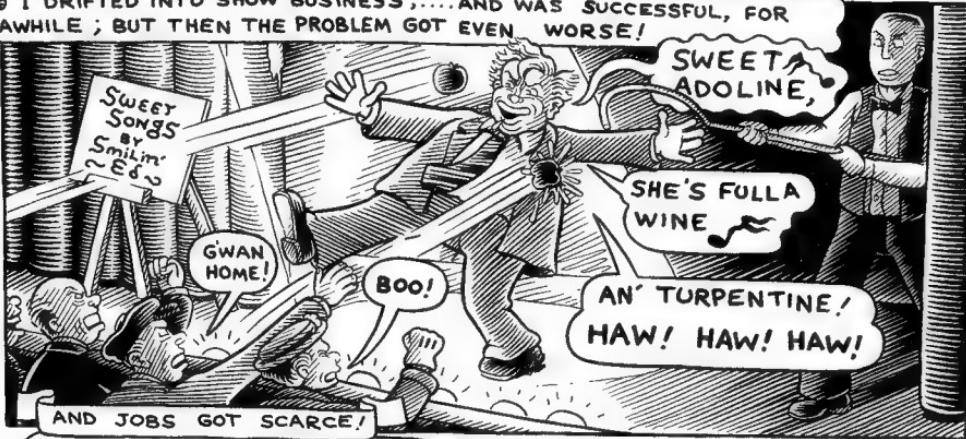


BUT SOON, DISTURBING HINTS OF THE OLD BLACK MAN'S WARNING
BEGAN TO SHOW.

JESUS LOVES ME, THIS I KNOW...

...AN' A BOTTLE O' RUM!
YO, HO, HO!

I DRIFTED INTO SHOW BUSINESS,....AND WAS SUCCESSFUL, FOR
AWHILE ; BUT THEN THE PROBLEM GOT EVEN WORSE!



BUT SOMEHOW, I MANAGED TO
GET A TRY-OUT IN A BRAND
NEW FIELD:.....RADIO!

WHEN THEY ASKED WHAT HAPPENED,
I LAMELY TOLD THEM I HAD
A FROG IN MY THROAT!



FINALLY, ME, AND THE DEMON IN
ME, HAD FOUND A WAY TO CO-EXIST.

SO FROGGY WAS BORN, AND I HAD ONE OF THE FIRST POPULAR RADIO KID SHOWS.

SO KIDS, EVERY MORNING AT TEN,...

POUR WATER IN YOUR RADIO!
HAW! HAW!

NO! NO!
NO! FROGGY!
WHAT I
MEANT TO
SAY WAS...

THROW IT OUT THE
WINDOW!
HAW! HAW! HAW!

TUNE IN
Smilin' Ed and
FROGGY!
SATURDAYS
10 A.M.

SOON FROGGY DOLLS WERE A POPULAR KID'S TOY!

COME TOYS

HEY KIDS,
FROGGY
DOLLS!
AS FEATURED ON
SMILIN'
ED'S
GANG!

WHEN TELEVISION CAME IN, THE BIG QUESTION WAS, WHAT MANNER OF CARTOON OR PUPPET WOULD WE USE TO DEPICT FROGGY IN THE NEW MEDIUM.

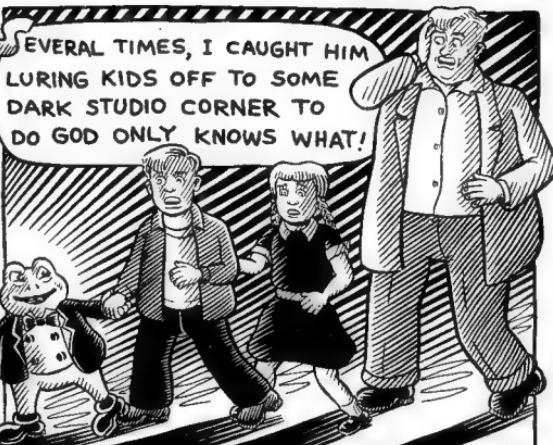
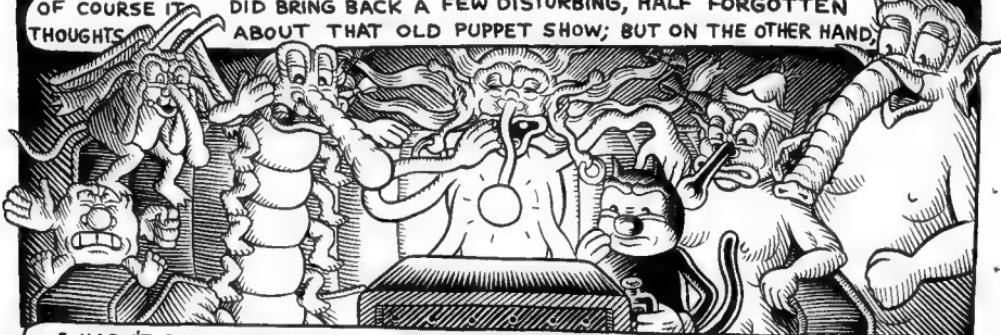
I TOLD
THEM I'D
GIVE THE
MATTER
SOME
THOUGHT.

BUT THE NEXT MORNING, THE PROBLEM HAD BEEN MYSTERIOUSLY SOLVED!

A FROGGY
DOLL IN MY
ROOM HAD COME
TO LIFE AND
WAS WALKING
AND TALKING
UNDER ITS OWN
POWER!

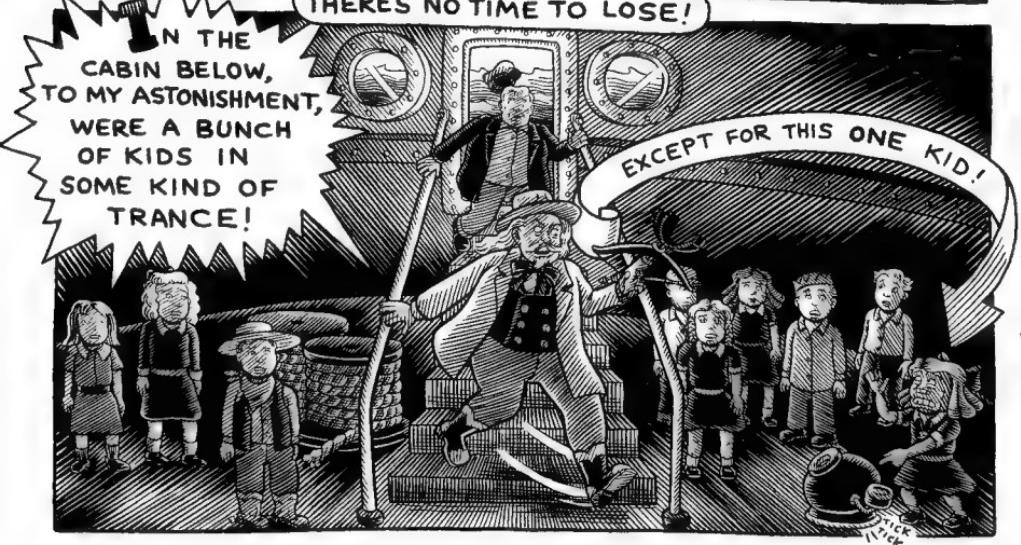
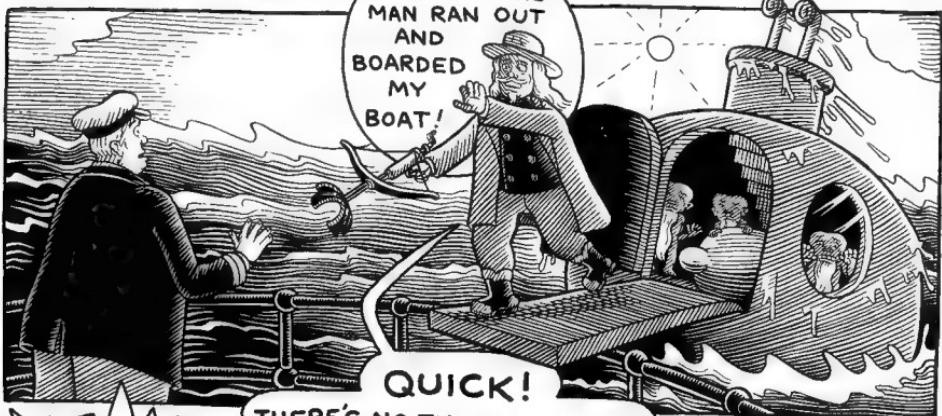
AND I SUDDENLY FELT STRANGELY FREE AND UNHAUNTED! IT WAS AS THOUGH THE DEMON THAT HAD BEEN IN ME WAS NOW IN THAT DOLL!

OF COURSE IT DID BRING BACK A FEW DISTURBING, HALF FORGOTTEN THOUGHTS ABOUT THAT OLD PUPPET SHOW; BUT ON THE OTHER HAND,



To prevent any future problems of that sort, I had one shot of kids filmed that we could use over and over on each show.





WHO GAVE THE MAN AN OMINOUS
PIECE OF TICKING CLOCK WORK.

HE DASHED UPSTAIRS WITH IT,

...AND
SHOT IT
INTO THE
SKY!

SPRONG!

BLAMO!

A SECOND LATER, IT
EXPLODED WITH A DEAFENING
ROAR!

THEN I DISCOVERED
THAT THE LITTLE GIRL
WHO FOUND THIS BOMB
WAS ACTUALLY A STRANGE
BEARDED MIDGET, DISGUISED
AS A GIRL!

AND AS
SOON AS THE
BOAT SETTLED,
SOMETHING
EVEN MORE
BIZARRE
OCCURRED!

ELEVEN MORE OF THE MIDGET MEN BOARDED OUR BOAT
CARRYING A LARGE, CRUDE WOODEN CARVING!

THEY HELPED
ME TO MY FEET, BUT SUDDENLY
I FELT DIZZY AND I GUESS
I FAINTED!



Smilin' Ed's Gang!

WHEN I
AWAKENED,
I FOUND MYSELF
HERE IN THE VAST
SUBTERRANEAN CAVERN
WITH ALL OF YOU.

OLD DOC LEDICKER
THERE DID HIS BEST
TO MAKE ME FEEL
WELCOME.

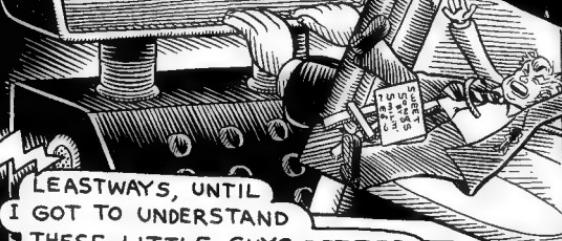
THE PLACE TURNED OUT
TO BE A KIND OF UNDERGROUND ARCHIVE OF
POPULAR CULTURE THAT HONEYCOMBED
THE EARTH'S INTERIOR.

HEY
HAD ALL MY T.V. SHOWS
PRESERVED AND STORED
DOWN THERE, AND THAT'S
NOT ALL!

T

HEY HAD FOOTAGE
OF FROGGY AND ME
GOING WAY BACK.

I WAS
ASTOUNDED!



LEASTWAYS, UNTIL
I GOT TO UNDERSTAND
THESE LITTLE GUYS BETTER.



ALTHOUGH I'VE GOT TO
ADMIT,



IT TOOK A HEAP OF CONVINCING.

DOC EXPLAINED
TO ME HOW
EVERYTHING
THESE GUYS SEE,

... IS BEAMED TO A
SPACE STATION, THIRTY
THOUSAND MILES AWAY!

WHERE
IT'S RECORDED ON
WHAT THEY CALL
LASER STORY
CHIPS!

OH BROTHER!

HEY! WHAT IS
THIS!
THE
TWILIGHT
ZONE?

THESE STORY CHIPS
ARE ALL COLLECTED AND STORED
BY OUR HOSTS DOWN HERE,
THE
GREY
ONES.

YELLOW

IN FACT THE WHOLE
THING MADE ME DIZZY.
AND I TOLD DOC
I WANTED TO
GO HOME.

DOC WAS NICE
ABOUT IT; SAID HE WOULDN'T
DREAM OF KEEPING ME HERE
AGAINST MY WILL.

BUT HE TOLD ME
FRANKLY THAT RETURNING
ME MIGHT BE JUST
A BIT DICEY.

YOU SEE, EVEN
AS WE SPEAK,
YOUR BODY
IS BEING
DISCOVERED
ON YOUR
CABIN
CRUISER.

TO EXPLAIN, HE
SHOWED ME A LASER STORY CHIP,
MADE THE DAY BEFORE...

WHAT YOU JUST
SAW WAS WHAT
USED TO BE
DESCRIBED AS
A CHANGELING
IN OLD FAIRY
TALES.

SOME
MIGHT CALL IT AN
OLD FAIRY TRICK,
BUT IT MIGHT BE
CHARACTERIZED AS
AN ADVANCED
FORM OF HYPNOTIC
SUGGESTION.

TO BE CONTINUED...

THE zERO zERO BOOKSHELF

Kim Deitch gALORE!

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SPECIAL BONUS
OFFER: Order any combination of Kim Deitch items from this page and get a 10% discount! And don't miss "The Strange Secret of Molly O'Dare" in ZERO ZERO #6 through #8!

zERO zERO BACK iSSUES

ZERO ZERO #1 (March/April 1995): Big debut issue, featuring Ted Stearn's "Fuzz and Pluck," "The Man With the Big Head" by David Holzman, Frank Stack's "New Adventures of Jesus," plus Pat Moriarity and Charles Bukowski, Max Andersson, Glenn Head, Henriette Valium, the first Collier strip, and a Panter cover! \$3.95

ZERO ZERO #2 (May/June 1995): Every issue from here on features "The Chuckling Whatstis" by Richard Sala. Also, Mack White's "Homunculus," "Car-Boy" by Max Andersson, new "Trashman" story by Spain, David Mazzucchelli, Mats!, and more. \$3.95

ZERO ZERO #3 (July 1995): ZZ debuts from Skip Williamson and Rick Altergott, Max Andersson's "Lolita," plus Mark Newgarden, "Fuzz and Pluck," and a cover by Henriette Valium. \$3.95

ZERO ZERO #4 (August 1995): Max Andersson's 15-page "Death," his biggest story since *Pixy*! P. Revers and Joakim Pirinen make their ZZ debuts, plus Michael Dougan and a back cover by Dan Clowes. \$3.95

ZERO ZERO #4 (August 1995): "Meat Box" by Kaz and Georgarakis premieres, plus Carol Tyler, Max Andersson, Mark Beyer, a Ted Stearn "dream" story, and Al Columbia's notorious "I Was Killing When Killing Wasn't Cool." \$3.95

ZERO ZERO #5 (Sept./Oct. 1995): Joe Coleman cover! Chris Ware frontispiece! Justin Green back cover! Plus Kim Deitch, extra-long Andersson Car-Boy story, "Meat Box," and Homunculus. \$3.95

ZERO ZERO #6 (Nov./Dec. 1995): Kim Deitch premieres "The Strange Secret of Molly O'Dare!" Plus "Fuzz and Pluck."

Skip Williamson, Penny Van Horn, and Rick Altergott. \$3.95

ZERO ZERO #7 (Jan./Feb. 1996): "Molly O'Dare" continues! 18-page "BestWorld" cover story by Bill Griffith! Plus Max Andersson, Gilbert Hernandez, Archer Prewitt, and more. \$3.95

ZERO ZERO #8 (March/April 1996): Extra-long anniversary issue, with 2-color "Sol Boy" story by Archer Prewitt, "Al Columbia," the end of "Molly O'Dare," Henriette Valium, "Homunculus," and "Fuzz and Pluck," and a cover by Charles Burns. \$5.95

ZERO ZERO #9 (May/June 1996): Snappy Sammy Smoot returns in a new story and cover by Skip Williamson! Sam Henderson and Stephane Blanquet lose their ZZ cherries, the first story by Susan Catherine and Oscar Zarate, and a Valium back cover. \$3.95

ZERO ZERO #10 (July 1996): Ultra-groovy Drew Friedman cover! Henriette Valium strips! A "Monroe" story by Sam Henderson! Plus Max Andersson, Aleksander Zograf, Jeff Johnson, more! \$3.95

ZERO ZERO #11 (August 1996): Dave Cooper's "Suckle" (which will run from #11 to #12 and #18 to #20) premieres! Plus Ted Stearn, Kaz, David Mazzucchelli, Max Andersson, and Roy Tompkins. \$3.95

ZERO ZERO #12 (Sept./Oct. 1996): Max Andersson's 15-page "Death," his biggest story since *Pixy*! P. Revers and Joakim Pirinen make their ZZ debuts, plus Michael Dougan and a back cover by Dan Clowes. \$3.95

ZERO ZERO #13 (Nov./Dec. 1996): Extra-long "Fuzz and Pluck" chapter, plus Sam Henderson, Skip Williamson, "Homunculus," Idiotland by Doug Allen, and Jim Blanchard! \$3.95

ZERO ZERO #14 (Jan./Feb. 1997): Stephane Blanquet cover, plus two, count 'em two, "Silent Stories"! Also, Mike Diana, Terry LaBan, and a Kim Deitch back cover. \$3.95

ZERO ZERO #15 (March 1997): Joe Sacco heads for Bosnia with 15-page "Christmas With Karadzic," first major story since Palestine! Plus Revers, Valium, Henderson, Columbia, and the serials. \$3.95

ZERO ZERO #16 (April/May 1997): Big ol' Brute of an anniversary issue, with a full-color "Jimmy Corrigan" story by Chris Ware, striking 2-color stories by Al Columbia ("Blood Clot Boy") and Henriette Valium ("The Man in the Sewer"), a new chapter of "MeatBox," plus Joakim Pirinen, Penny Van Horn, Skip Williamson, P. Revers, Aleksander Zograf, Krystine Kryttre, and a cover by Kaz. \$5.95

ZERO ZERO #17 (June 1997): Michael Dougan's terrifying "Double Booked"! Penultimate "Chuckling Whatstis," new "Fuzz and Pluck" chapter, the divine Miss Renée French, and more! \$3.95

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ZERO ZERO #19 (August 1997): First installment of "Pop. 666" by Semerano and Ghermandi! Final episode of "Meat Box"! Plus "Crumple," "Johnny Gun" by Max Andersson, and short strips and illustrations by Blanquet, Glenn Head, and Jeff Johnson! \$3.95

ZERO ZERO #20 (Sept.-Oct. 1997): The grand finale of "Crumple"! The American premiere of Lewis Trondheim! Cover and feature strip by Glenn Head! Another two-color masterpiece by Al Columbia! Plus a full-color strip by M.L. Teague, and chapters of "Pop. 666" and "Homunculus"! \$3.95

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